

Message Text

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ACTION DLOS-06

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 ISO-00 IO-14 CG-00 DOTE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 CEQ-02 COA-02

COME-00 EB-11 EPA-04 NSF-04 SCI-06 FEA-02 OMB-01

DRC-01 /144 W

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R 112227Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 381

INFO USUN 432

C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 2143

USUN FOR AMBASSADOR STEVENSON

FROM AMBASSADOR AND LOS TEAM

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR

SUBJ: LOS

1. WHILE LAST MINUTE DECLARATION OF GOVERNMENT HOLIDAY
UNFORTUNATE, VISIT OF LOS TEAM PROVIDED OCCASION FOR USEFUL
CONSULTATIONS WITH AMBASSADOR AND EMBOFFS. IN REVIEW
SUBSTANTIVE QUESTIONS, THE FOLLOWING TWO POINTS EMERGED AS MAJOR
U S LOS GOALS IN PANAMAPRIOR TO CARACAS SESSION OF CONFERENCE.

(A) REFERENCE IN US-PANAMA DECLARATION ON CANAL TO
PANAMANIAN GEOGRAPHIC POSITION AS PRINCIPAL RESOURCE OF
PANAMA PRESENTS POTENTIAL PROBLEMS ON STRAITS IF SPAIN
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OR OTHER U S STRAITS OPPONENTS PICK IT UP. PANAMA ITSELF

WOULD PROBABLY WISH TO AVOID ANY ANALOGIES BETWEEN CANAL AND STRAITS, AND WE SHOULD TRY TO STIMULATE THIS CONCLUSION.

(B) PANAMANIAN CLAIMED 200-MILE TERRITORIAL SEA AND SUPPORT OF MINORITY HARD-LINE POSITIONS IN LATIN AMERICA IS LINKED MORE TO POLITICAL RELATIONS WITH PERU AND PERUVIAN SUPPORT ON CANAL PROBLEMS THAN TO SUBSTANTIVE INTERESTS. HOWEVER, CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR MINORITY POSITION IN LATIN AMERICA COULD HAVE NEGATIVE IMPACT ON PANAMANIAN GOAL OF HEMISPHERIC SUPPORT REGARDING CANAL. PANAMA'S LONG-TERM INTERESTS IN PROTECTING SHIPPING USING THE CANAL WOULD INDICATE SUPPORT FOR FREEDOM OF NAVIGATION, PARTICULARLY IN LIGHT POTENTIAL FOR CARIBBEAN OR ECUADORIAN INTERFERENCE WITH CANAL TRAFFIC. WHILE THERE IS NO EVIDENCE PANAMA ATTACHES SUBSTANTIVE IMPORTANCE TO THE LARGE FLEET UNDER PANAMANIAN FLAG, FAILURE TO SUPPORT NAVIGATIONAL POSITIONS THAT PROTECT FLEET CAN NEGATIVELY AFFECT PANAMANIAN PRESTIGE. ACCORDINGLY, WE SHOULD TRY TO STIMULATE AT LEAST A SHIFT TO MAJORITY SANTO DOMINGO DECLARATION/LA APPROACH ON NAVIGATION.

2. WE BELIEVE MOST EFFECTIVE INFLUENCE ON PANAMA WOULD BE APPROACH FROM OTHER LATIN AMERICANS. IN VIEW POSSIBILITY OF CHIEF OF GOVERNMENT TORRIJOS' TRIP TO VENEZUELA, THE VENEZUELANS MIGHT BE PARTICULARLY EFFECTIVE. AMB. STEVENSON, IN HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH AMB. AQUILAR, MIGHT ATTEMPT TO STIMULATE VENEZUELANS TO TALK TO THE PANAMANIANS. TO BE MOST EFFECTIVE, THE MESSAGE WOULD PROBABLY HAVE TO GET THROUGH TO FOREIGN MINISTER TACK.

3. IN VIEW FACT TEAM SCHEDULED TO BE IN PANAMA AFTERNOON AND EVENING APRIL 24, ENROUTE SANTIAGO, EMBASSY WILL ATTEMPT ARRANGE MEETINGS AND/OR SOCIAL CONTACT WITH PANAMANIANS.
JORDEN

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